

Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUEBEC 00025 310024Z
ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1231
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL MONTREAL PRIORITY

UNCLAS QUEBEC 0025

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS:PINT, CA
SUBJECT: GARNEAU AND RYAN IN TROIS RIVIERES

REF: OTTAWA 351

1. RAYMOND GARNEAU AND CLAUDE RYAN TOOK THEIR LEADERSHIP QUEST TO TROIS-RIVIERES JANUARY 29 FOR THEIR SECOND HEAD-TO-HEAD CONFRONTATION OF THE CAMPAIGN. THE PRESS GENERALLY TERMED THE OUTCOME A DRAW, ALTHOUGH THE MONTREAL STAR DETECTED A WARMER RESPONSE FOR GARNEAU.

2. TROIS-RIVIERES IS JEAN CHRETIEN COUNTRY, AND BOTH RYAN AND GARNEAU FACED SHARP QUESTIONS FROM MILITANTS WHO WERE UNCOMMITTED TO EITHER CANDIDATE. GARNEAU PLAYED UP THE TWIN THEMES OF HIS CAMPAIGN SO FAR, HIS RECORD AS A PARTY MAN AND HIS SUPPORT FOR FREE ENTERPRISE. HE DREW WARM APPLAUSE BY ATTACKING THE PQ'S NO-FAULT AUTO INSURANCE LAW AND URGING THAT THE GOVERNMENT GET OUT OF THE AUTO INSURANCE BUSINESS ENTIRELY. RYAN, ON THE OTHER HAND, EMPHASIZED THE LARGER HISTORIC EVENTS WHICH ARE FACING THE QUEBECOIS, "THE BATTLE OF THE REFERENDUM, THE NEXT PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS, AND THE REFORM OF FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS," AND PORTRAYED HIMSELF AS A
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CANDIDATE WHO COULD PROVIDE A CONSTRUCTIVE ALTERNATIVE RATHER THAN BEING "SIMPLY ANTI-SEPARATIST."

3. COMMENT: JUDGING BY THE PRESS REPORTS, GARNEAU MADE A MORE OVERTLY POLITICAL SPEECH THAN HE HAD AT HULL, AND SCORED APPRECIABLY WITH HIS AUDIENCE BY NEEDLING RYAN. GARNEAU CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE EFFECTIVE IN THIS KIND OF POLITICAL

ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE AND WE WILL PROBABLY SEE MORE OF IT IN
UPCOMING WEEKS. WE DOUBT THAT RYAN WILL BE ABLE TO STAY
ABOVE THE BATTLE -- HE WILL HAVE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HE CAN
SLUG IT OUT AT GARNEAU'S LEVEL. BOSWELL

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Message Attributes

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